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Dear Friends,

First, I would like to apologize for the lack of newsletters over the last couple of months. As you can imagine, spring and summer are the busiest time for us here at the Fulbright Office as we prepare a new group of Vietnamese Fulbright scholars and students for departure to the U.S.

At the same time, we are also actively recruiting prospective candidates for the next academic year, 2002-2003. This year, thanks to many of your referrals, we had a large and competitive pool of candidates for the student program, which had completed the preliminary selection process.

In the coming months, I will continue to travel around the country to recruit candidates for the Vietnamese Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program. As always, I will rely on your knowledge and referrals since you know best who makes a good candidate for the Program. For more information about eligibility requirements, please refer to the brief summary of the Program in this newsletter.

Finally, I would like to announce the departure of Ms. Diane Young, Program Officer of the Vietnam Student Program. We appreciate Ms. Young's contribution to the Program and wish her much luck as she returns home to Washington D.C. with her family. I also want to welcome Mr. Ben Weber, who is replacing Ms. Young, and Mr. Robin Sponseller, who is the new Program Assistant.

With the new staff members on board, we will be able to publish the newsletter on a monthly basis and can begin planning the Second Annual Fulbright Conference, tentatively scheduled for Fall. Please check the Fulbright Newsletter in the coming months for more details about the Conference.

Best wishes,



Tran Xuan Thao, Ph.D.  
Director  
Fulbright Program in Vietnam

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## Fulbright Update

### Students Applying for Fulbright Fellowships

Each year the Fulbright Student Program in Vietnam sends qualified, mid-career professionals to the United States for graduate level study. With the preliminary selection process completed, the 2002 Fulbright Fellowship Competition is well underway. Those who meet the minimum criteria will take the institutional TOFEL and attend an information session to learn more about the Fulbright Program and this year's selection process. Useful information about how to complete a competitive application will also be presented. These sessions will occur in Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, Nha Trang, and Ho Chi Minh City in June. The deadline for sending in complete applications for the Fulbright Student Program is August 01, 2001.

### Fulbright Vietnamese Scholar Program Announces Recruitment for 2002-2003

As one of the four components of the Fulbright Program in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Fulbright Scholar Program provides up to six grants annually for Vietnamese scholars to lecture and/or research at American universities. The Program provides a stipend, living expenses for the full term of the grant, and transportation to and from the U.S. for successful applicants. Grants range from three months to one year.

Candidates applying to the Program must meet the following criteria:

- Vietnamese citizens under the age of 50 holding a Ph.D. degree.
- Adequate English skills to conduct their research and/or lectures in the U.S.
- Special consideration will be given to scholars in the academic disciplines of American Studies, environmental science, foreign policy, economics (including international economics and agricultural economics), public health, law, public administration, educational administration, information technology, and women's studies.

If you know someone who would be interested in applying for the Vietnamese Fulbright Scholar Program, please have them contact the Fulbright Office, Public Affairs Section-Hanoi, Rose Garden Tower, 6 Ngoc Khanh Street, or call (04) 831-4580, ext. 150. The application deadline for the 2002-2003 academic year is October 15, 2001.

### From you:

Have you moved recently? Please write your new contact details here and fax or email to PAS - Hanoi: (04) 831-4601 or [fulbrightvn@fpt.vn](mailto:fulbrightvn@fpt.vn).

New Address: \_\_\_\_\_

New telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

New fax: \_\_\_\_\_

New E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fulbrighter News

### Ben Weber and Robin Sponseller Join Fulbright Program in Vietnam

With the departure of Diane Young, the Fulbright Office welcomes Benjamin (Ben) D. Weber who has replaced her as the new Program Officer for the Vietnam Student Program, one of the four traditional components of the Fulbright Program in Vietnam. Ben will assist Dr. Tran Xuan Thao with the administration and recruitment of the Student Program.

Ben first came to Vietnam in March 1996 while a student at Vassar College, traveling the country studying regional differences. Two years after completing his BA in History at Vassar, he began studying Diplomatic History at the University of Kentucky with Dr. George C. Herring. While in graduate school, Ben studied Vietnamese during the summer of 1999 at the University of Oregon SEASSI Program. His MA thesis, "Trapped by Ideological Ghosts: J.F.K., W. Averell Harriman, and the Laos Crisis 1961-1963," evaluated the effects that the Laos negotiation had on U.S. policy towards Vietnam.

He has lived and worked in Hanoi since last July. Previously, he worked with the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIPF) distributing motorbike helmets to children and developing a traffic safety education curriculum. Prospective candidates with questions can reach Ben at (04) 831-4580, ext. 155 or via email at [weberbd@pd.state.gov](mailto:weberbd@pd.state.gov).

The Fulbright Office also welcomes Robin Sponseller, the new Fulbright Program Assistant, who will assist Dr. Tran Xuan Thao in administrating the program, planning special events and producing the monthly newsletter. Robin received his BA in Public Policy from Western Washington University and recently completed his MSc in Development Studies at the London School of Economics. He also studied Vietnamese for two years in the U.S. and one summer at the Hanoi Foreign Language College in 1996.

Robin hopes to learn more about Vietnam's higher education system and educational exchange between the U.S. and Vietnam though working at the Fulbright Program. Though he misses San Francisco, where he previously lived, Robin is happy to be back in Hanoi and enjoying his first month of work at the Fulbright office. Robin can be reached at (04) 831-4580, ext. 150 or via email at [sponsellerr@pd.state.gov](mailto:sponsellerr@pd.state.gov).

### Fulbrighters Are Invited to a Farewell Luncheon for Ambassador Pete Peterson and Mrs. Vi Peterson

As many of you already know, Ambassador Pete Peterson and Mrs. Vi Peterson are leaving us to return to their home state Florida. During his four years presiding over the U.S. Embassy, the Fulbright Program in Vietnam has benefited a great deal from his commitment and enormous support. We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to Ambassador and Mrs. Peterson by inviting all current Fulbrighters and alumni to a farewell luncheon on **July 11, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m at the Daewoo Hotel in Hanoi**. Please RSVP with the Fulbright Office at (04) 831-4580, ext. 150 or via e-mail at [sponsellerr@pd.state.gov](mailto:sponsellerr@pd.state.gov). We hope to see all of you there to bid your good-bye to Ambassador and Mrs. Peterson.

## Fulbrighter News

### Vietnamese Fulbright Scholars and Students Chosen for This Year's Program

Candidates for this year's Vietnamese Fulbright Scholar and Student programs have been chosen. This year's class includes 7 scholars and 25 students. Their academic and professional backgrounds range from information technology to environmental studies and education to economic development.

If you are interested in providing advice and mentoring for the new Fulbrighters, please contact the Fulbright Program office.

#### Vietnamese Fulbright Scholars

Dr. Lam Quang Thiep  
Dr. Nguyen Nhu Binh  
Dr. Nguyen Thanh Thuy  
Dr. Nguyen Truong Son  
Dr. Phung Xuan Nha  
Dr. Ta Ngoc Cau  
Dr. Tran Manh Tuan

#### Vietnamese Fulbright Students

Mr. Bien Quang Tu	Ms. Bo Hong Thi Mai
Ms. Dang Thi Nhan	Ms. Dao Le Mai Thanh
Ms. Huynh My Tien	Ms. Huynh Thi Thu Ba
Ms. Ly Thi Lan	Mr. Nghiem Thanh Tung
Mr. Nguyen Buu Huan	Mr. Nguyen Duc Thien
Mr. Nguyen Quoc Sy	Ms. Nguyen Thuc Anh
Mr. Nguyen Trong Nghia	Ms. Pham Minh Phuong
Ms. Phan Thu Trang	Mr. Thai Quang Thuan
Mr. Tran Duc Thuan	Ms. Tran Hoang Ha
Ms. Tran Thi Phuong	Mr. Tran Tuan Phong
Mr. Trieu Quoc Viet	Ms. Trinh Thi Thuy Lien
Mr. Truong Thi Kim Lien	Ms. Vo Hang Phuong
Ms. Vu Van Yen	

## USEFUL INFORMATION:

#### Hanoi:

U.S. Embassy  
7 Lang Ha  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
Tel: (04) 843-1500  
Fax: (04) 843-1510

Public Affairs Section - Hanoi  
6 Ngoc Khanh  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
Tel: (04) 831-4580  
Fax: (04) 831-4601  
Email: Fulbrightvn@fpt.vn

#### Ho Chi Minh City:

U.S. Consulate  
4 Le Duan, District 1  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Tel: (08) 822-9433  
Fax: (08) 822-9434

Public Affairs Section - HCMC  
9/F, Saigon Centre  
65 Le Loi, District 1  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Tel: (08) 821-6400  
Fax: (08) 821-6405

#### Fulbright Program Website:

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/vietnam/wwwfhfp.html>

## Fulbright Story

### Jack McDonald Helps Develop Accreditation System in Vietnamese Higher Education

*The following is an article by Jack McDonald, a U.S. Fulbright scholar, about the development of a uniform accreditation system both in Vietnam and the ASEAN region.*

Fulbright experiences vary enormously from one placement to another; my own has been unusually distinctive for the degree to which it has allowed me to learn about a whole region rather than a single country. My assignment has been with the Centre for Education Quality Assurance and Research Development at the Vietnam National University in Hanoi. One of the Centre's functions is to advise the Vietnamese government on establishing quality assurance (or accreditation) standards for Vietnamese higher education systems. These efforts take place in the context of similar projects going forward in the 17 member universities of the ASEAN University Network (AUN). These 17 universities represent 10 countries which are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The ASEAN quality assurance initiative only began in November of 2000 with a document signed by the Trustees of the AUN referred to as the "Bangkok Accord."

To understand this regional thrust, in April I attended the first meeting of newly appointed Chief Quality Officers from the 17 member universities, held in Kuala Lumpur. They had been charged by the Bangkok Accord with developing a framework of policies, guidelines and specific benchmarks by which academic credit would ultimately be recognized by all universities in the region. These tasks are going to be challenging because the member universities come from countries as prosperous as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, as well as from impoverished countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. Vietnam is better off than the latter three countries, but has a very long way to go to enjoy the resources of the top group. As the only observer admitted to this meeting, I was privileged to witness two days of difficult but productive negotiations which began to sketch the outlines of regionally defined academic standards.

Back in Vietnam, a new group, the Vietnam University Network (VUN), has been formed by the leading universities in the country. It meets several times a year to share information, but at the top of its agenda is improving the quality of Vietnamese higher education. This is particularly important at the moment since the university system is being gradually reorganized towards greater autonomy. Such autonomy will give universities greater responsibility for the quality, efficiency and relevance of the education that they deliver. Currently this responsibility lies mostly with government ministries. At a May meeting of VUN, held in Dalat, I was able to address over 200 of Vietnam's university leaders on the subject of teaching assessment techniques as a component of quality assurance.

Based on my tenure as a Fulbrighter in Vietnam, I was able to work with the Associate Director of my host organization to write a joint paper describing the state of quality assurance in Vietnam. This paper was accepted for delivery in late May at the Sixth Annual Conference on Higher Education Quality Assurance (Birmingham, England). While in England, I was able to renew my acquaintance with European regional movements towards quality assurance systems and accreditation, putting Vietnam's recent progress into the context of Europe. Our paper also put Vietnam on the radar screen of international quality assurance in higher education. Hong Kong, Australia and South Africa were also prominently represented at this conference, but Vietnam was the only developing country represented there.

Because of all of this travel, I have not been able to get to know Vietnam and Vietnamese higher education in as much depth as I might otherwise have done. The biggest lacuna to be recorded in this area is my lack of experience with the southern part of the country, which of course has a very different character from the north, where I spent virtually all of my time. But the price paid also bought the important advantage of being able to view Vietnamese higher education in a regional (and to some extent a global) context.

## Fulbright Feature

### Vo Ha Duyen Reflects on Her Experience as a Vietnamese Fulbright Student in the U.S.

Studying in the U.S. can be both challenging and rewarding for Vietnamese Fulbright students. Just ask Vo Ha Duyen, who undertook a Master of Law program at Temple University in Philadelphia, and she will tell you that there were both hard times and sweet memories of her experience in the U.S. All in all, her Fulbright experience has changed the way she sees the world and has helped her develop professionally.

Duyen recalls that the most difficult time was when she signed up to take the New York Bar Exam on her own initiative. Even though the bar exam was not a part of the Fulbright program, she studied for it because she felt Fulbright had given her a unique opportunity to explore the U.S. and its legal system, and she wanted to make the best of it.

For two months, Duyen studied from 7 a.m. until midnight, taking breaks only for meals and an occasional phone call to check with other fellow students on their progress. With 28 new subjects to learn for the exam, all of which were completely foreign to her, there was no time for anything else. As the exam date drew closer, stories of people dropping out, fainting and crying during previous exams were whispered around and such stories were not encouraging to her at all. After taking the exam, Duyen remembers looking in the mirror and saying to herself, "I look like I've just been pumped out of a water pipe."

Of course, not all of her time was spent studying and stressing out over exams. There were wonderful camping trips near the Potomac River, Fulbright conferences where she connected with other Fulbrighters, and family dinners. Duyen was living in a world completely different from the world she knew in Vietnam, and the ways of life in her new home were fascinating to her. She met people from all over the world, as well as many American veterans of the war in Vietnam.

Of the latter, she says, "I realized how the war still affects people today on a personal level. I understand now that most people who were in the war cannot forget it, and the memories overshadow their lives in different ways, for different reasons. Nevertheless, many of them as well as most of the people of my generation wish that our parents and grandparents, whichever side they used to be on, could forget the past and move on: to shake hands, to make friends, and to love."

Academically, Duyen's perception of the law was changing and expanding. She was able to compare Vietnamese law and legal history to the situation in other developing and developed countries, taking into consideration economic, cultural, historical, and political factors. Before returning home, Duyen spoke at a law school symposium on the subject of the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement in Los Angeles and worked at a law firm in Washington D.C. for five months.

When asked how the Fulbright experience has changed her and her career goals, she replies, "I have more confidence in addressing issues of Vietnamese law with foreign investors from different countries, and I have gained a much more international perspective on the practice of law. It was an important trip that helped me mature and grow." Duyen is now a partner at Vilaf-Hong Duc, a business law firm that provides legal services to foreign investors and exporters in Vietnam. She will return to the U.S. to complete the New York Bar procedures in the near future.



## Announcement

### The 2002-2003 Humphrey Fellowship Competition

The U.S. Embassy is now accepting applications for the 2002-03 Humphrey Fellowship competition. The Humphrey program is a one-year, non-degree, academic and research public administration fellowship for promising young and mid-career Vietnamese professionals. The focus of the program is on professional development; permission will not be granted to pursue an advanced academic degree in the United States during the fellowship and within the two years immediately following the fellowship. Participants spend one year at a U.S. university while interning off-campus with a U.S. organization. Humphrey Fellows are selected from diverse fields, yet all share a commitment to leadership and public service.

Eligible candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Five years of professional experience related to proposed field of study.
- In possession of at least one university degree, with an academic background sufficient to undertake graduate level study.
- Proficiency in both written and spoken English, with a minimum TOEFL score of 525 paper-based, or 195 computer-based. Eligible candidates who have not taken the TOEFL will have an opportunity to take the test administered by the U.S. Embassy.
- Candidates must NOT be recent university graduates, university teachers with no management responsibilities, individuals who have attended a graduate school in the United States for one academic year or more during the seven years prior to August 2002, or individuals with other recent U.S. experience (more than six months during the five years prior to August 2002).

The strongest candidates are those who draw a close and clear relationship between the work they are now doing in Vietnam, the study program they hope to pursue in the U.S. and the value of their U.S. training to their future work in Vietnam.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is also offering support for additional Humphrey fellows in the fields of drug abuse for more specialized candidates. Candidates must be able to meet NIDA's criteria for this program.

Further information about the program and the NIDA-sponsored Humphrey fellowships can be found on the U.S. Embassy's Web site at <http://usembassy.state.gov/vietnam> or on the Institute of International Education's Web site at <http://www.iie.org/pgms/hhh>. Please contact the Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi (tel: 04-8314580, ext. 152) or the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City (tel: 08-8216400) for further information and application materials.

Application deadline is August 31, 2001.